



Carriage Dog Summer Roundup

a personal perspective from Anne Dickens of the British Carriage Dog Society

Top: Anne Dickens drives Percheron Nobel at the Working Horse Trust Open Day in July with her Gold Carriage Dog Fenris at the axle; below, Splash follows Miranda Purves driving Addy at Only Paws and Horses. Silver Carriage Dog Splash also took the biggest class of the day at the National Fenix Trials

Find out more from Chris Cleland on 01323 833732 or www.carriagedog.org

Record numbers at Fenix National Trials

Sixteen of the 20 entries at this year's National Fenix Carriage Dog Trials in July worked with carriages. The biggest win went to Todd owned by Tim Stafford of Hampshire. Todd and Tim won the Gold Groom Handler class and the Groom's Award which is the equivalent of the championship for groom handled dogs. Local driver Dawn Tebbett drove her horse Storm Queen to a Fenix Flyer to enable Tim and Todd to compete.

Four-year-old Todd is the first dog to go round the challenging 40km Gold course at Lincomb Chasers near Stourport on Severn two years in a row. Last year he was second in the same class, so Tim, who is a trainer with Guide Dogs for the Blind, was delighted to move up a notch to take home the silverware this time round.

I had the honour of judging the carriage dogs and the standard of work from them was exceptional this year. Many left the obedience field with similar scores, but as these trials are as much a test of the dog's capacity for endurance as they are an obedience test, it is right that the vet judge's scores from the endurance run had to sort out the winners.

for the second year in a row by trials veteran Skittle owned by Gail Cotterill.

Winner of the Bronze Carriage Dog class was John Wilmot of Cheshire with Ruby, to whom I was pleased to award the Judge's Special cup. John drives his pair of stunning Appaloosas on busy roads and has therefore trained Ruby to run alongside (and on) the carriage for safety. It is much harder to establish a precise working position without the physical barrier of the carriage itself, but Ruby worked beautifully alongside the wheels. Most importantly, Ruby's training reflects the circumstances she and John face in their day to day work on today's roads, a factor we should all take into consideration when working our dogs.

Charlie Brown won the Groom Handler Bronze Carriage Dog class with experienced Trialler Ron Gallop of Essex handling. Charlie Brown also won the Best Rescue award to reflect not only his lovely Bronze test, but also the fact that his owners, Ron and wife Maggie, took him on after a very bad start in life and numerous homes, and have turned him into a happy, healthy working dog.

This is the first time since the first ever trials when I have not competed in some shape or form, so I was thrilled that Milo, owned by Donna Simmons, BDS Assistant Area Commissioner for Kent, qualified as a Silver Carriage Dog after being rehomed with Donna at the end of last year owing to family breakdown. Milo joins his brother Fenris and sister Freya as the third litter sibling out of my own Silver Carriage and Road Dog Munin to qualify at a national trials.

Ten dogs passed the Silver qualifying obedience test and completed the 20km Silver course. This was a Kent double! The winner of the Silver Carriage Dog class was Splash owned by Miranda Purves with the Silver Groom Handler Carriage Dog class taken



It was a thoroughly enjoyable weekend with the course beautifully presented by the landowners. It's worth taking up the sport just for a trip around the stunning Worcestershire countryside!

Only Paws and Horses

This new event at the Hop Farm in Kent saw a display of working carriage dogs alongside Western riding, side saddle and show jumping. Along with the traditional display of the various components of trials, my own Munin delighted the crowd with a few extra exercises, including retrieving my dropped glove, doing the same with my driving whip (no mean feat for a dog to pick up this awkward object), a send-away and stay from the carriage, and finally a ride-on - useful in an emergency when you're out, such as when a dog cuts a paw.

The team will be displaying again at Paws in the Park in September. As usual, thanks go to the members of local driving clubs who help us to display the dogs by tuning out to drive for groom handlers.

Elegant Hereford

Two Dalmatians were welcomed in the Hereford and District Driving Group's Spring Show Concours d'Elegance class, Gold Carriage Dog Merlot owned by Jane Friend and Cato, a Dalmatian Welfare dog, owned by Pat Dutson.

Promoting the Heavies

The crowds at the Working Horse Trust Summer Open Day in Eridge, Kent are always the most numerous and appreciative ringside. I drove my Percheron Nobel to his restored Ralli cart - admittedly not a traditional combination - with Fenris working at the axle. Gail Cotteril brought Skittle along and Daniel Brown kindly volunteered his coloured cob to enable Skittle to show off his typically solid work behind the backstep of a heavy horse marathon vehicle.

A First for Ireland

Later in the year the first ever regional Trials for Southern Ireland will be held in Saunders Grove, Baltinglass, Co. Wicklow on the weekend 4-5 September. There will be a training day on Saturday with the trials held on Sunday at which Road and Carriage Certificates and Bronze and Silver classes will be scheduled. **AD**



3



1



2

Dalmatian dates for your diary

4-5 September Irish Carriage Dog Trials Trials and Training, Saunders Grove, Baltinglass, Co Wicklow Contact Maura Reade 0035 3599 155583

11-12 September Paws in the Park Carriage dog display - both days: one morning, one afternoon The Hop Farm Paddock Wood, Kent. Contact Anne Dickens 01622 892494

2 October Trials Workshop for existing & aspiring carriage dog trial organisers, judges, stewards and competitors Gawcott Village Hall, Gawcott, nr Buckingham. Contact Jane Friend 01568 708074

24 October Trials Training Day - Morning sessions: learn from experienced triallers. Afternoon: try your dog in practical sessions, including Trials Obedience Test. No horses required. Kingsland, Herefordshire HR6 9QB. Contact Jane Friend 01568 708074 or catherine.friend@btinternet.com

Photos: 1 Tim Stafford on the backstep of Dawn Tebbett's Fenix Flyer with Gold Carriage Dog Todd; 2 John Wilmot's Ruby also took the Judge's Special cup home for her work alongside the wheels of her carriage; 3 Anne Dickens' Munin demonstrates a few extra useful exercises at Only Paws and Horses event - running on the offside of the vehicle - useful to avoid road kill, aggressive dogs or other distractions on the kerb side when out on the road.



Denise Taylor, three-times Carriage Dog Trials Champion, breeds puppies. Reared indoors, socialised with people all ages, dogs, household noises, etc. Hearing tests BAER at Newmarket. Parents hip scored. Carriage dog instinct and ability both sides and sire twice Carriage Dog Champion. Lovely calm temperament parents.
01376 573973 or 07771 902027 (Essex)
email carriagehouse@btinternet.com

**2010 Fenix Carriage Dog Trials - Results**

Carriage Dog Gold - Groom Handler: 1 Todd, Tim Stafford - Groom's Award; 2 Mr Darcy, Ron Gallop
Carriage Dog Silver: 1 Splash, Miranda Purves; 2 Clover, Julie Swindells; 3 Domino, Maura Reade (Eire); Spin, Avril Pluck; Daisy, Julie Swindells; Rolex, Julie Swindells; QO Milo, Donna Simmons
Carriage Dog Silver - Groom Handler: 1 Skittle, Gail Cotterill; 2 Nugget, Gail Cotterill
Road Dog Silver: 1 Tally, Alison Burgess
Carriage Dog Bronze: 1 Ruby, John Wilmot - Judges' Special; 2 Levi, Maura Reade
Carriage Dog Bronze: 1 Charlie Brown, Ron Gallop - Best Rescue; 2 Poppy, Celia Gilbert; 3 Brenna, Jude McDermott *Also competed:* Demi, Ali Rummey; Evian, Alex Cobb-McGill; Rodney, Donna Cox. QO = Qualification Only

Left: Gail Cotterill's Silver Carriage Dog Skittle works behind Daniel Brown's coloured cob at the Working Horse Trust Open Day

PLAS EQUESTRIAN

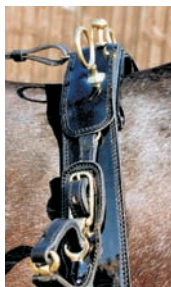
Tel: 01267 253251
 email: info@plasequestrian.co.uk



Fly the flag with our British-made harness
 Suitable for all occasions
 Webbing Easy clean
 Leather (Sedgwicks first grade hides)
 Made to measure for any size
 Sets priced from £200 including VAT & post



Plus underhalters, aprons, spares kits, etc. We also make white show halters, in-hand and riding bridles. Endurance, training and breaking equipment.



www.plasequestrian.co.uk
 TRADE ENQUIRIES WELCOME

Carriage dogs continued...

The tests in brief

Here are the tests the dogs perform at the Trials.

Carriage Test:

Willingness to work	Attitude throughout the test
Axle	Trot/walk 100-200 metres in axle position
Axle with distraction	Trot 100 metres ignoring distraction dog
Sit, stand or down stay	Halt 1; 1.5; 2 minutes in sit, down or stand
Speed	Extended trot/canter 100 metres
Distance Trial	Bronze - 10km, Silver - 20 km, Gold - 40 km

Road Test

Recall	Recall to horse from halt to walk
Hock	Trot/walk 100-200 metres in hock position
Hock with distraction	Trot 100 metres ignoring distraction dog
Sit, stand or down stay	Halt 1; 1.5; 2 minutes in sit, down or stand
Speed	Working trot or canter 100 metres
Distance Trial	Bronze - 10km, Silver - 20 km, Gold - 40 km

Background to the Trials

The purpose of Carriage Dog Trials is to demonstrate the use of Dalmatians in one of the roles they have been bred through the years to perform: that of a companion, decoration and guard for horses and carriages in past times.

It is both an endurance and obedience event and all competing dogs must do a basic obedience test alongside their handler's horse or carriage. The aim of the obedience test is to replicate, as far as possible, modern horse and carriage working environments, where the dog must be under the handler's control at all times. The endurance element tests each competing Dalmatian's stamina and capacity for work. It is essential that the dog shows willingness and enjoyment of its work throughout the trial.

So, the trials comprises an obedience and an endurance test for the dog, and includes vet checks on the endurance course. **AD**

Find out more and join the British Carriage Dog Society:

Mrs Chris Cleland, 01323 833732

chris.cleland@dsl.pipex.com or see www.carriagedog.org

www.ponyandcarriage.co.uk
 Telephone
05600 729143